



*A 501c3 Non-Profit Animal Welfare Organization*

P. O. Box 730, Charlotte, MI 48813

[www.voiceless-mi.org](http://www.voiceless-mi.org)

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October 28, 2013

Senator Joe Hune  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Senator Hune & Members of the Senate Agriculture Committee:

Voiceless-MI is a state of Michigan and federal 501c3 nonprofit. Voiceless has a cat and dog foster program, but what sets us apart from other rescue groups is our spay/neuter programs. We offer low cost & free spay/neuter for Michigan residents that cannot afford to have their pets fixed. We also have a Trap-Neuter-return (TNR) program to help control the feral and stray cat population that offers free spay/neuter & vaccines. So far in 2013, we have fixed over 800 pets for people that needed help. Getting a handle on the pet overpopulation problem is one of our main goals and we do this through spay and neuter.

Our letter to you today is to voice our support for SB 560. Doing TNR, we deal with feral & stray cats on a daily basis. We have to house the cats prior to, and following, spay/neuter surgery. For these cats, being held in captivity is a very stressful and terrifying time. The stress that they are put through every moment that they are being held inevitably causes upper respiratory issues. That can go very fast though a kennel environment. The shelter environment is not just stressful for a feral cat, but also for strays and friendly cats. The facts show that redemption rates on cats are incredibly low and they are actually more likely to find their way home through other means. A shorter holding period will mean healthier cats able to leave the stressful environment sooner.

We also believe that large scale breeding facilities have gone unregulated for far too long. Voiceless-MI was one of many rescues that were involved in the Allegan, Michigan puppy mill bust. We spent thousands of dollars on the Shih Tzus that we rescued from that mill bust. Had SB 560 been in place, think of the pain and suffering that might not have happened. The amount of manpower from the county shelter to rescues all over Michigan was unbelievable. Yet, with a bill like SB 560 in place, it could have been very preventable.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Holly Thoms  
President